The Development Potential of Transnational Migrants in the Health Sector in Geneva: Focus on sub-Saharan Africa

Research to Inform the International Policy Dialogue

International Organization for Migration

IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental body, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to: assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues; encourage social and economic development through migration; and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

Contacts
Frank Laczko
Head, Research and Publications Division, IOM
flaczko@iom.int
00 41 (0) 22 717 416

Dina Ionescu
Research Officer, IOM
dionescu@iom.int
00 41 (0) 22 717 93 24

Ibrahima Dia
Researcher, IOM-UNIGE
idia@oim.int
00 41 (0) 22 717 92 41

Ibrahima Guisse
Researcher, IOM-UNIGE
iguisse@oim.int
00 41 (0) 22 717 92 4

Websites
IOM
http://www.iom.int/

UNIGE, Sociologie
http://www.unige.ch/ses/socio/

RUIG-GIAN
http://www.ruig-gian.org/

17 route des Morillons, C.P. 71
1211 Geneva
Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 717 9111
Fax: +41 22 798 6150
Email: publications@iom.int
www.iom.int
Our research contributes to the current debate on enhancing the positive linkages between migration and development. It pursues the question of how countries of origin may benefit from the human, social and financial capital represented by their citizens established abroad.

The contribution of migrants to the development of their country of origin cannot be dissociated from their status, standard of living and integration in the host country. Consequently, this project proposes to examine the question of transnational migrants through the eyes of home and host countries. The project proposes to adopt a sectoral approach by concentrating on professionals and students in the health sector, where the proportion of migrant workers is very high and the issue of brain drain acute.

Objectives

- Offer new insights into the strategies of transnational migrants from sub-Saharan Africa in the health sector in Switzerland and, in particular, in Geneva.
- Inform decision makers on the tools and programmes able to maximize opportunities for transnational migrants, and to support their participation in the development of their home countries as well as their contribution to the host country.

The research is designed to determine:

- What are the strategies (transfer of competences, financial flows, investments, possible returns) of transnational migrants working in the health sector are in relation to their country of origin?
- How the professional conditions and acquisition of competences in Switzerland, in particular in the health sector, influence the willingness and capacity to contribute to the development of the country of origin?
- The role of policy in maximizing the benefits of migration for migrants, and the host and home countries?

Methodology

The project will pursue a qualitative research method, based on extensive discussions with three national migrant groups, in several areas of the health sector (hospitals, medical duty stations, geriatric centres, home services) in Geneva.

Outputs

- Policy recommendations for the home and host countries, designed to improve their human resources management in the health field.
- A publication presenting the research and its major conclusions.
- Two “Policy Dialogue Round Tables”, bringing together decision makers with a migration and development background, researchers, diaspora and migrant network representatives, representatives of international organizations, the public service and non-governmental.

Research team

The multidisciplinary team collaborating on the project is composed of two principal partners, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the University of Geneva. The project is funded by the Geneva International Academic Network (GIAN). This collaboration puts to use synergistic competences (migration, health, development) and approaches (academic and international politics) for the benefit of the project. To optimize this exchange, two researchers from the University will work part-time with IOM for the whole length of the project (February 2006 to April 2007).

Bolzman, Claudio - Institute of Social Studies (HES-SO) and Department of Sociology, University of Geneva
Burton-Jeangros, Claudine - Department of Sociology, University of Geneva
Cattacin, Sandro - Department of Sociology, University of Geneva
Dia, Ibrahima - UNIGE-IOM
Guisse, Ibrahima - UNIGE-IOM
Haour-Knipe, Mary - Migration Health Department, IOM
Ionescu, Dina - Migration Policies and Research, IOM
Laczko, Frank - Research and Publications Division, IOM